

EXT. TRAP HOUSE - NIGHT

DEMARR (30s) stands on the porch talking into his earbud, shoulders coiled, jaw knotted – the exact shape of someone who's practiced vigilance until it's muscle memory. His eyes sweep the block in precise arcs, cataloging shapes and movement: the sagging stoop two doors down, the glint off a passing car's rim, the shadowed alley that smells faintly of bleach and old smoke.

DEMARR

(serious)

If everybody minded they own damn business the world would be a better place.

DEMARR (CONT'D)

Yeah you think I'm playin. On my mama, I swear most of these fools who be gettin killed in the streets be because somebody ain't minding they own shit.

Demarr's eyes squints as he sees something or someone moving towards him in the distance.

DEMARR (CONT'D)

Who is that?

It's man wearing a hoodie approaching with his hands jammed deep into the hoodie pockets.

Paranoid, Gage and Demarr cling to their weapons as they try to make out who it is, but they can't.

DEMARR (CONT'D)

Who is the fuck is you?

Demarr's finger hovers just above the trigger, knuckle near the cold rim. Time compresses to the heartbeat before another shout – or a gunshot.

The man in the hood then pulls his head up. He removes an earbud with a slow, apologetic motion. The man in the hood, RAAZIQ (20s), looks up and takes out his other ear bud and puts them in their case.

RAAZIQ

Hey what's up yall?

Demarr instantly feel relieved as he re-holster their weapons.

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DEMAR

Man you almost got yo head blown off.
What you doing around here college boy?

RAAZIQ

(laughing)
Bout to try to beg Rah for a couple
dollars.

DEMARR

(cutting him off, serious)
It's a ton of money inside this house and
I promise yo broke ass ain't touchin a
dollar of it.

The mood shifts. The joking dies. Amare's smirk fades; Gage senses the tightened wire beneath Demar's tone.

RAAZIQ

I was jokin'.

DEMARR

That's the problem - y'all joke too much.
Rah don't play. I ain't playin with that
man. He pays me to be a soldier.